

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 916

By Pitts

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the twenty-fifth anniversary of Greater Missionary Baptist Church.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should recognize and applaud those venerable institutions of faith that have truly made a lasting and beneficial impact not only on their congregations but also on the communities they serve; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable entity is Greater Missionary Baptist Church, which for twenty-five years has served as a beacon of faith and hope for the people of Clarksville and Fort Campbell, Kentucky; and

WHEREAS, Greater Missionary started as a vision of Pastor Kim Allen and the members of the Little West Fork Baptist Church, who saw a need for outreach in the African-American community of Clarksville. After thoughtful prayer and consideration, Brother Willie J. Freeman took up the mantle of leadership and began working on what was called the Mission; and

WHEREAS, after repairs and reconstruction were made on the "Old Church Building," Pastor Freeman held the first service of Greater Missionary Baptist Mission on September 5, 1993, with an attendance of three people; and

WHEREAS, the first three members of Greater Missionary Baptist Mission were Sister Jean Lyle, Sister Vanessa Lyle, and Sister Annie Bonds; and

WHEREAS, since that first service, Greater Missionary has grown exponentially, both in numbers and capabilities, including earning a Baptismal Achievement Record ranking of 14<sup>th</sup> in the State of Tennessee; undertaking numerous building expansions; ordaining fourteen ministers, twenty-one deacons, and thirty-two ministers; and starting five mission churches; and

WHEREAS, with the help of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, four acres of land on Ringgold Road were purchased from Brother Lewis Dorris on which to build the first expansion, and on June 25, 1995, Greater Missionary Baptist Mission was constituted as a Baptist church by Little West Fork Baptist Church with a groundbreaking ceremony soon after. At the time, Greater Missionary Baptist Church enjoyed a congregation of 230 charter members; and

WHEREAS, on May 11, 1997, the members of Greater Missionary Baptist Church, Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church, Little West Fork Baptist Church, and the Cumberland Baptist Association, along with Clarksville Mayor Don Trotter and many other community supporters marched from the "Old Church Building" to the "New One"; and

WHEREAS, the church continues to undergo expansions and improvements, having constructed a Christian Education and Child Development Center; a 12,000-square-foot Little Visionary Daycare Center; and a GMBC Prayer Garden, with the construction of the GMBC Family & Community Life Center to soon begin; and

WHEREAS, the vision of Greater Missionary Baptist Church has been guided by the Biblical scriptures found in Matthew 28:18-20 and Acts 1:8; and

WHEREAS, the scripture of Matthew says, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."; and

WHEREAS, the scripture from Acts reads, "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."; and

WHEREAS, the vision of Greater Missionary Baptist Church today includes goals of creating ministries that will meet both the spiritual and physical needs of the family, the church, and the community; financially supporting the church through tithes and offerings; establishing a five to six million dollar annual budget; purchasing ten or more acres of land for the construction

of the Family Life Center; creating a locally, state-wide, and nationally broadcast television program; founding at least three home mission churches, two foreign mission churches, and a foreign mission school; and establishing a child development center and a senior citizens daycare center; and

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly recognize the importance that faith plays in the lives of many Tennesseans, and it is wholly appropriate that we applaud the twenty-five years of time and effort that Greater Missionary Baptist Church has dedicated to improving its community, both in Clarksville and beyond; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend the twenty-fifth anniversary of Greater Missionary Baptist Church, salute its many contributions to its community, and extend to each member of the congregation our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.